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Activities of the Department of Public Information: news services

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report, prepared in response to General Assembly resolution 66/81 B, summarizes the key advances made by the Department of Public Information from July 2011 to February 2012 in promoting the work of the United Nations to the global audience through its news services.

News services, which is one of three subprogrammes of the Department and implemented by its News and Media Division, is responsible for strengthening support for the United Nations by enhancing the quality, format and timeliness of information products on the Organization, and for increasing the geographic range and frequency of use of its products by media outlets and other users.

The activities of the other subprogrammes of the Department — strategic communications services and outreach services — are described in separate reports of the Secretary-General (A/AC.198/2012/2 and A/AC.198/2012/4), respectively.

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I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 66/81 B, the General Assembly took note of the reports of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Department of Public Information submitted for consideration by the Committee on Information at its thirty-third session, and requested the Secretary-General to continue reporting to the Committee on the activities of the Department.

2. In the same resolution, the General Assembly called on the Department to provide specific information on a number of its activities. The Bureau of the Committee on Information advised the Department to present the requested information in three parts, in accordance with the three subprogrammes of the Department: strategic communications services, news services and outreach services.

3. The present report, which covers the news- and media-related activities of the Department, highlights progress made in the area of radio, television, video, photographic, print and Internet services to media and other users globally. A particular focus of the report is the use of multilingualism on the Department website. The growing use of new media, including YouTube and Facebook, is also highlighted.

4. Unless otherwise indicated, the report covers the activities of the Department for the period from July 2011 to February 2012.

II. News services

A. Overview

5. Throughout the reporting period, the Department of Public Information introduced changes to build on and support its efforts to spread news and information about the work of the United Nations to the widest possible audience worldwide. These changes involved the creation of a virtual newsroom, combining radio and web-based reporting to maximize the impact of news and features production. Editorial coordination was improved through daily news and planning meetings, allowing for the increased sharing of multilingual content across all language units and platforms.

6. The Department sought to broaden the journalistic scope of its coverage through the expanded use of features, profiles and in-depth interviews that help to provide a more compelling and comprehensive picture of the work of the United Nations at Headquarters and around the world. A series of such interviews posted on the *UN News Centre* featured the President of the General Assembly, Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser; the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General, Edward Luck; the Joint Special Representative for Darfur, Ibrahim Gambari; the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Libya, Abdel-Elah Al-Khatib; a Department of Peacekeeping Operations staff member who had been held captive in the Sudan; and the former Under-Secretary-General Brian Urquhart. In-depth interviews were also conducted with several Presidents of the Security Council.

7. The Department has continued to prioritize the multilingual nature of its work, encouraging content-providing departments and offices to produce materials in all

official languages for posting on the United Nations website. It continues to pursue opportunities with academic institutions to broaden the scope and improve the quality of a range of multilingual information materials made available online.

8. These goals have also informed the outreach of the Department to social media. Work in this area focuses on increasing the number of platforms through which audiences can access the Department's products. Social media, essentially, provide an additional option to audiences, who are still able to access all materials by means of traditional broadcasting and web pages. Social media also allow the Department to cross-promote its products and to link its work with that of the wider United Nations system. During the reporting period, the Department organized the first-ever global conversation with the Secretary-General on major social networking sites, soliciting questions in multiple languages and streaming the event live and with subtitles in four official languages on Facebook, Livestream and *UN Webcast*, and in translation into Chinese on *Sina Weibo*.

B. United Nations Radio

9. With the traditional means of communication remaining a central part of its public information activities, the Department focused on improving the effectiveness of its radio operations in the six official languages, plus Portuguese and Kiswahili. United Nations Radio programmes covered a broad range of priority issues on the agenda of the Organization, with a series of features and reports highlighting developments related to climate change, sustainable development and non-communicable diseases and such topics as the independence of South Sudan, elections in conflict-affected countries and the work of peacekeeping missions. United Nations Radio also created programming that commemorated special events and observances, such as the International Year for People of African Descent and the International Year of Forests.

10. Highlights of United Nations Radio coverage included stories about:

(a) The High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on the Prevention and Control of Non-communicable Diseases and the High-level Meeting on addressing desertification, land degradation and drought in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication;

(b) *Elections*. United Nations Radio covered United Nations efforts in support of elections in Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Liberia and other countries;

(c) *Peacekeeping*. United Nations Radio covered developments and activities of the United Nations missions in Lebanon, Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Darfur, South Sudan and Haiti;

(d) *South Sudan*. United Nations Radio produced special programmes in eight languages to mark the independence of the newest State Member of the Organization;

(e) *Climate change*. United Nations Radio coverage included extensive reporting on the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Durban, South Africa, and the visit of the Secretary-General to the Solomon Islands and Kiribati in the South Pacific region. United Nations Radio also provided extensive coverage of

the tenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, which was held in the Republic of Korea in October;

(f) *The Middle East*. United Nations Radio provided continuous reporting on United Nations work related to the situation in the Middle East and the question of Palestine, including the activities of the Quartet and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, as well as the applications of Palestine for membership in the United Nations and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization;

(g) *Population*. United Nations Radio produced an array of special reports and interviews to cover the events and activities related to the 7 billion population milestone;

(h) *Africa*. The humanitarian crisis in the Horn of Africa was the subject of numerous reports that highlighted United Nations efforts to assist the affected countries.

11. The Department continued to make enhancements to the attractiveness and usability of the United Nations Radio website in all languages, particularly with a view to expanding the use of multimedia content. As part of those efforts, United Nations Radio teamed up with *UN News Centre* staff to draw greater attention to the work of the sixty-sixth session of the General Assembly by producing a series of short videos featuring delegates, journalists and staff speaking in their own languages about their participation in the work of the Assembly. To enhance their multimedia skills, United Nations Radio staff attended training sessions on video editing and slide-show production.

12. Human interest stories designed to attract broader audiences featured a behind-the-scenes report on the main deliberative organ of the United Nations, including the intricate protocol arrangements during the high-level debate in the General Assembly Hall.

13. Throughout the reporting period, United Nations Radio sought to increase the number of media outlets using its programmes, adding 150 stations to its list of partners. While expanding its partnerships with broadcasters in various parts of the world, United Nations Radio continued to pursue opportunities presented by social media networks to reach broader audiences. Those efforts yielded positive results: the total number of United Nations Radio followers on various social media platforms is nearly 63,000, an increase of some 300 per cent compared with the second half of 2010.

14. As of the end of 2011, 45 per cent of total visits to the United Nations Radio Kiswahili website came from social networking sources, up from 21 per cent in 2010. This trend was also visible on United Nations Radio web pages in other languages: 14 per cent of total visits to the United Nations Radio English-language page (up from 4.4 per cent in 2010), 19 per cent in French (up from 5 per cent), 18 per cent in Portuguese (up from 7 per cent), 17 per cent in Arabic (up from 5 per cent), 13 per cent in Spanish (up from 6 per cent), and 7 per cent in Chinese (up from 1 per cent).

C. United Nations Television

15. Bringing television and video images of the Organization at work to the greatest possible audiences remained a major focus of the Department's news-related operations. This included live coverage and feature programming for use by television broadcasters in different parts of the world and the production of varied video material for online distribution through multiple platforms. Among the examples that demonstrated the outreach potential integrating new and traditional media, the Global Conversation held by the Secretary-General in September was webcast live from United Nations Television studios at Headquarters and, as noted earlier, reached millions of followers around the world through social media platforms. In December, the Department also helped to produce a similar social media event in New York with the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, which was disseminated by means of *UN Webcast* and the United Nations Television channel.

Live coverage

16. United Nations Television continued to provide broadcast-quality live feeds of meetings of the Security Council, the general debate in the General Assembly and other major events at Headquarters in New York and the United Nations Office at Geneva. The programming was also made available through the UNifeed distribution platform, as well as the *UN Webcast*. The ready-to-air coverage was closely monitored and widely used by international broadcasters and television news agencies.

Feature programming

17. The long- and short-format narrative pieces produced by United Nations Television have served as staple products used by international broadcasters for decades, and their viewership is now being increased through national and regional outlets around the world. The Department's flagship television programme, *21st Century*, was regularly carried by broadcasters in more than 60 countries. To further expand the show's audience, the Department is in the process of developing a French-language version of *21st Century*, for which it has already identified a possible presenter and produced a promotional DVD. Segments from this monthly feature series, which in October produced its sixtieth episode, won recognition at a number of international film festivals and contests:

(a) *Cambodia: A Quest for Justice* was nominated for the prestigious International Emmy Award in the best current affairs category;

(b) *Kenya Maasai: The Race to Preserve the Past* and *Dead End: Afghan Migrants in Greece* were selected as winners at the United Nations Association Film Festival. The segment on Afghan migrants was also screened at the United Nations Association event on Immigration, Asylum and Refugee Policy in the European Union, where a representative of United Nations Television participated in a panel discussion on European migration that followed the showing of the film;

(c) *Africa: Digital Graveyard* won an award at the Ekotop Film Festival in Slovakia, in October.

18. *UN in Action*, a series of short television stories highlighting a wide range of critical United Nations issues, produced and distributed a total of 45 pieces between March and November 2011 in English, French, Russian and Spanish. A pilot Arabic version of the series was created and distributed in October to potential Arabic-language broadcast channels.

19. As it worked to expand the thematic and geographical scope of its feature coverage, United Nations Television continued to improve its partnerships and co-production arrangements with United Nations agencies, funds and programmes and with missions in the field. The Department selected and awarded the United Nations Television Prize for short films produced by young people worldwide in conjunction with the Plural Plus film festival, convened by the Alliance of Civilizations. Among other examples of cooperation, United Nations Television produced three feature stories related to the United Nations Population Fund 7 Billion Actions campaign and a video on the rule of law for the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. At the same time, the Department of Public Information has stepped up its efforts to deliver United Nations Television's feature programming, including segments from *21st Century* and *UN in Action*, to non-traditional outlets and venues, including academic institutions, international conferences and seminars, as well as social media platforms.

20. As part of a new initiative, the first in a series of in-house screenings of *21st Century* pieces was arranged jointly with the Department of Political Affairs. This event featured the award-winning film on the Cambodia tribunal and included a panel discussion with the filmmaker and the Director of the Asia and Pacific Division of the Department. Stories from *UN in Action* were featured in a wide array of events and venues, including: a ceremony marking the International Day of Rural Women (October); the launch of the *State of World Population* report (October); the United Nations Pavilion at the Eye on Earth Summit (Abu Dhabi, 12-15 December); and an event at the Permanent Mission of Nigeria to the United Nations marking the International Day of the African Child.

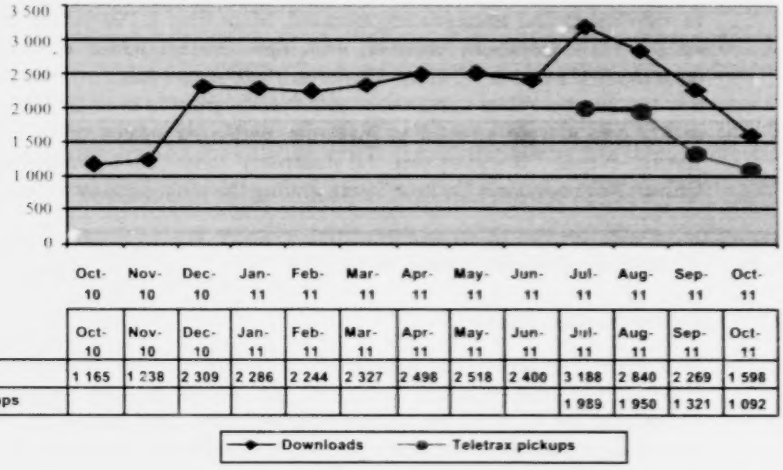
UNifeed

21. The number of outlets rebroadcasting United Nations news, features and exclusive United Nations interviews around the world continued to grow, reflecting the increased demand for free, quality content at a time of shrinking budgets for media organizations, together with the growth of small community and web-based television outlets. UNifeed, which provides content from Headquarters and more than 40 United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, peacekeeping missions and other entities six days a week through Associated Press (AP) Television, reached more than 1,000 broadcast points globally. The UNifeed website now offers MOV format in both High Definition and Standard Definition and remains an important platform for broadcasters in developing countries and for smaller broadcast outlets that do not have access to the AP Television satellite. UNifeed continues to provide material to non-governmental organizations (NGOs), governmental agencies and educational institutions.

22. The Teletrax monitoring system showed an increase in pickup of stories by means of satellite by broadcasters in the Americas, particularly in the United States, during the general debate of the General Assembly in September. For most of the period under review, pickup from Europe also showed a significant increase,

accounting for 42 per cent of the total pickup at the end of 2011, compared with 24 per cent during the corresponding period in 2010. In the Middle East, Teletrax continued to report an ongoing trend of steady pickup by televisions stations, with international broadcasters in the lead.

Figure I
Satellite pickups/downloads of UNifeed stories, October 2010-October 2011



	Oct-10	Nov-10	Dec-10	Jan-11	Feb-11	Mar-11	Apr-11	May-11	Jun-11	Jul-11	Aug-11	Sep-11	Oct-11
Downloads	1 165	1 238	2 309	2 286	2 244	2 327	2 498	2 518	2 400	3 188	2 840	2 269	1 598
Teletrax pickups										1 989	1 950	1 321	1 092

Note: Teletrax was down during parts of the reporting period as a result of technical issues.

Webcasting

23. In its continuing efforts to capitalize on the global reach of video by means of the Internet, the Department took further steps to improve live and on-demand streaming services through its *UN Webcast* operation. Increasingly, live streaming from official meetings was provided not only in English, but also in the original language of the speaker, in an effort to promote multilingualism. Global audiences for live webcasts of meetings and events at Headquarters, including the work of the Security Council and the sixty-sixth session of the General Assembly, continued to grow. In September, the number of video views nearly quadrupled in comparison with the same period in 2010. In addition to its live streaming, *UN Webcast* made available more than 4,200 video clips for on-demand access by users around the world during the reporting period.

24. *UN Webcast* provides live and on-demand webcast coverage not only for meetings held at Headquarters in New York, but also for select United Nations events held abroad. During the reporting period, *UN Webcast* covered the 2011 high-level segment of the Economic and Social Council in Geneva and the Alliance of Civilizations meeting in Doha. *UN Webcast* continued to assist with coverage of Human Rights Council sessions in Geneva and has now trained staff at the United Nations Office at Geneva to provide this service, increasing efficiency and cutting travel costs.

25. The Department's webcasting service was used as a cost-effective way to facilitate internal communication through live streaming of town hall meetings with senior officials in New York and United Nations staff at various locations. Archived webcast videos of such events, as well as recorded training sessions, are accessed with growing frequency by staff.

26. To further expand the reach of its television and video products, the Department continued to enhance its presence on online platforms, including YouTube, where the United Nations channel it maintains showed a steady increase in viewership and audience engagement. More than 2,100 videos are now available on the United Nations channel, with new content added on a daily basis. The accumulated number of video views on the channel has now exceeded 3.7 million, and the number of its subscribers and friends grew to over 20,000. Special projects and playlists were created to highlight particular issues or to bring attention to special events. "It's your General Assembly" and "2011 World Humanitarian Day Citizen Ambassador's Contest" were among the most popular videos.

D. Photos and audiovisual archives

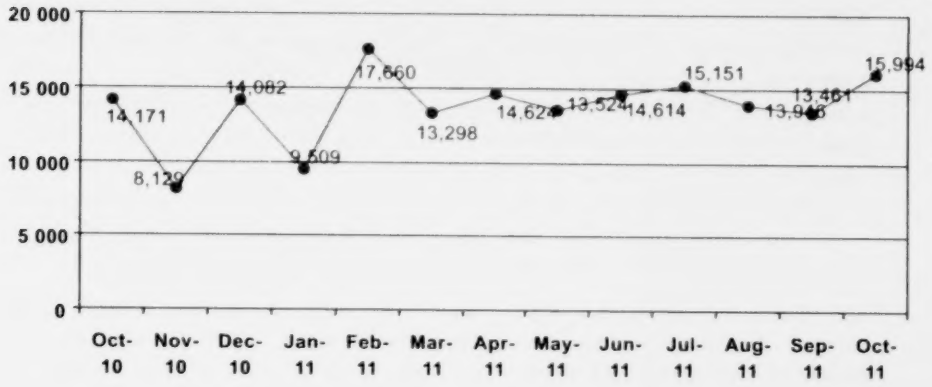
United Nations Photo

27. Providing timely and quality photo coverage of major events and activities at Headquarters and ensuring access to the widest possible range of still images illustrating the work of the United Nations in the field remained a key goal for the Department during the reporting period. From July to November 2011, for example, the United Nations Photo team covered 1,762 events at the United Nations complex in New York, as well as the official visits of the Secretary-General to 22 countries.

28. With some 5,000 new photographs added to its database, the United Nations Photo web page served as a key access point for users from all walks of life, from journalists and photo editors to the public at large and representatives of Governments and NGOs. This has translated into a growing number of site users. Reflecting interest in the general debate and high-level events during September 2011, the number of page views peaked at 665,000. Approximately 30 United Nations photographs were also picked up and published by major news wire services. Figure II shows the continued growth in the number of high-resolution images downloaded from the website — another indicator of professional interest.

Figure II

Downloads of high-resolution images from the United Nations Photo website, October 2010-October 2011



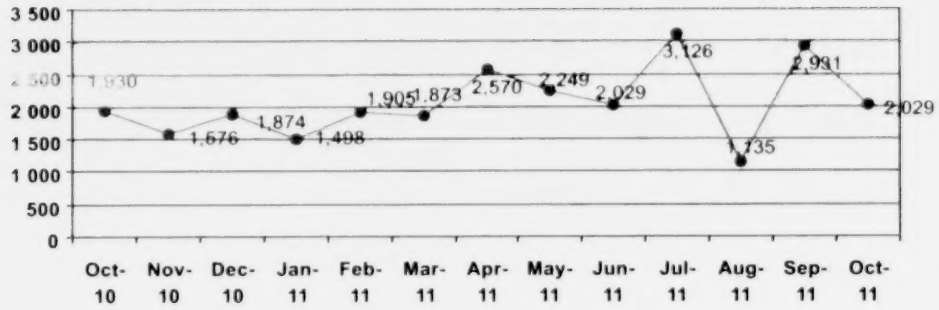
29. The presence of United Nations Photo on social media continued to grow in popularity. In October 2011, cumulative views on Flickr exceeded 1.4 million, a 123 per cent growth year on year, while the number of Facebook fans surpassed 11,000, more than doubling the figure a year ago.

30. United Nations Photo continued to work with the Photo Library to make available on the website a greater variety of legacy photos documenting the early years of the Organization. Between July and November 2011, approximately 1,700 legacy images were published, concluding an intensive process of digitization, retouching and caption editing. Given the existing level of resources, the task of digitizing the remaining treasure trove of approximately 150,000 legacy photos remains a formidable challenge.

Audiovisual Archives and Library Services

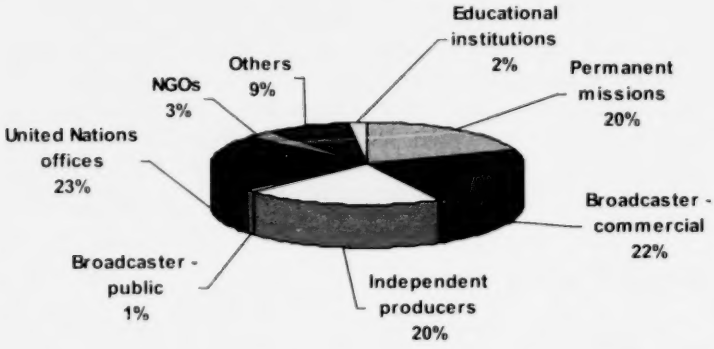
31. The Audio Library serves as a valuable resource for the media, delegations and the general public, providing access to audio recordings of meetings of the Organization's main bodies, as well as of special events and press briefings at Headquarters. As the year progressed, the number of downloads showed a trend towards steady growth, despite seasonal variations, as figure III shows. At the same time, United Nations Radio Classics — old radio programmes published on the Audio Library web page after being digitized — continued to attract new users, including students and researchers.

Figure III
Downloads of unedited audio recordings



32. The Film and Video Library saw a 13 per cent year-on-year increase in the number of requests it served during the reporting period, while the number of its registered clients reached 4,000. As figure IV shows, the Library provides an important service to the Member States as well as to the media.

Figure IV
Film and Video Library clients by categories, October 2010-December 2011



33. A key challenge facing the Department is the digitization of its entire audiovisual collection, preserving a unique heritage for future generations while providing easier access to the public. In addition to seeking the support of Member States, the Department has been actively reaching out to institutions, foundations and others that may have an interest in supporting this important activity. A generous private donation, made possible through the United Nations Foundation, will enable the Department to digitize audio recordings of all the concerts that have taken place at Headquarters since the 1950s. The project, expected to be completed within a year, will ensure the preservation of a unique part of the Organization's heritage and that of the League of Nations. The Department plans to provide on-demand Web access to the digitized concerts for audiences around the world.

E. United Nations News Centre

34. The multilingual *UN News Centre* portal continued to serve as one of the Organization's premier online news sources, providing breaking news and in-depth features on United Nations activities seven days a week, and attracting visitors in high numbers from around the world. The journalistic style of its news and features coverage makes it an attractive free resource for print and web-based media outlets around the world at a time of budget cuts.

35. During the reporting period, the *UN News Centre* in English averaged more than 1 million page views per month and reached the milestone of publishing its 40,000th online news story. Versions of the portal in other official languages also registered increased views. The thematic News Focus pages were continuously updated to facilitate visitors' access to a wide range of news-related sources and materials.

36. Stories from the *UN News Centre* were actively used by a wide variety of websites — internal and external alike — as a way of providing dynamically updated reports on the latest developments around the United Nations system. Stories from the portal were featured on the web pages of various United Nations departments, offices and agencies, as well as online outlets run by NGOs and academic institutions. They also regularly appeared on news aggregator websites. The *UN News Centre* following on social networks increased dramatically during the reporting period, with close to 40,000 fans on Facebook and 14,000 followers on Twitter (English and French combined) in November. Over the two-month period in October and November, the fan base on the *UN News Centre* English-language Facebook page grew by 5,000.

37. The *UN News Centre* has also expanded its feature coverage, with stories highlighting the work of staff in the field and a major increase in the number and range of interviews in its "Newsmakers" series. In line with the efforts by the Department to expand the scope of multimedia products, the News Services Section, which has overall responsibility for the portal, produced and published a number of innovative features, including:

(a) An in-depth interview, in English and French, with the outgoing Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Haiti, Edmond Mulet (http://bit.ly/nnAan8);

(b) *Backstage buzz*: a series of short videos offering behind-the-scenes multilingual perspectives from delegates and United Nations staff members at the opening of the sixty-sixth session of the General Assembly, speaking in their own languages (http://bit.ly/ojpuym);

(c) A multimedia photo-essay featuring an original interview with photographer Marco Grob upon his return from Afghanistan on mission with the United Nations Mine Action Service (http://bit.ly/umOwe2).

F. Press releases

38. As a key part of its news-related services, the Department continued to provide fast, accurate and comprehensive coverage of all open intergovernmental meetings and press conferences at Headquarters and other locations. Between July 2011 and January 2012, the meetings coverage operation produced a total of 2,361 press

releases, with 11,803 pages in English and French, including end-of-year round-ups of Security Council and General Assembly actions. As part of its efficiency savings, the Department has reduced the number of printed copies it produces from a total of more than 4 million in 2006 to fewer than 400,000 in 2010.

39. The coverage, made available in hard copy at Headquarters and distributed to worldwide audiences by means of the Internet and the United Nations information centres, included:

(a) A total of 445 press releases covering meetings of the main part of the sixty-sixth regular session of the General Assembly, from mid-September to December 2011;

(b) A total of 390 press releases on the Security Council, including a summit-level meeting on preventive diplomacy, and substantive debates on Afghanistan, the Middle East, Côte d'Ivoire, Somalia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Libya, the Sudan, the international criminal tribunals, women and peace and security, and the protection of civilians, as well as press statements;

(c) Nearly 1,100 other press releases, including statements, remarks and messages from the Secretary-General and the Deputy Secretary-General, as well as material from other United Nations offices and departments;

(d) Close to 500 summaries of press briefings of the Spokesperson for the Secretary-General and other press conferences held at Headquarters.

III. Other services

Services to the media

Media liaison and accreditation

40. During the general debate in the General Assembly and the high-level meetings (18-27 September), the Department processed almost 2,000 media accreditations, facilitated 143 photo opportunities with the Secretary-General and various dignitaries, and monitored and provided logistics to 22 stakeouts, 15 press conferences and 9 major events in the North Lawn Building. It also assisted journalists in the Media Centre and the Media Liaison Desk in the General Assembly building. During the same period, 206 special passes were given to press attachés to allow them to escort their national press and official photographers and cameramen to bilateral meetings and other events taking place in restricted areas.

41. The Department's Media Accreditation and Liaison Unit continues to disseminate information about United Nations events through its daily media alert, which is e-mailed to 4,000 recipients. It sends alerts concerning meetings and key documents through its Twitter account that targets the press and has more than 2,000 followers. Between 1 July and 1 December 2011, the Department conducted 15 media tours for groups of professional journalists and journalism students.

IV. United Nations website

A. Growing content and improved presentation

42. Alongside its efforts to enhance the overall usability and structural coherence of the United Nations website (www.un.org), the Department developed or redesigned websites for other offices of the Secretariat, including the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Office for Disarmament Affairs, the Peacebuilding Commission, the Department of Political Affairs, the Office of the Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide and the Office of Administration of Justice. All sites were developed in the six official languages and in accordance with the accessibility standards required by the General Assembly. Overall, more than 8,000 new multilingual pages have been added to the site.

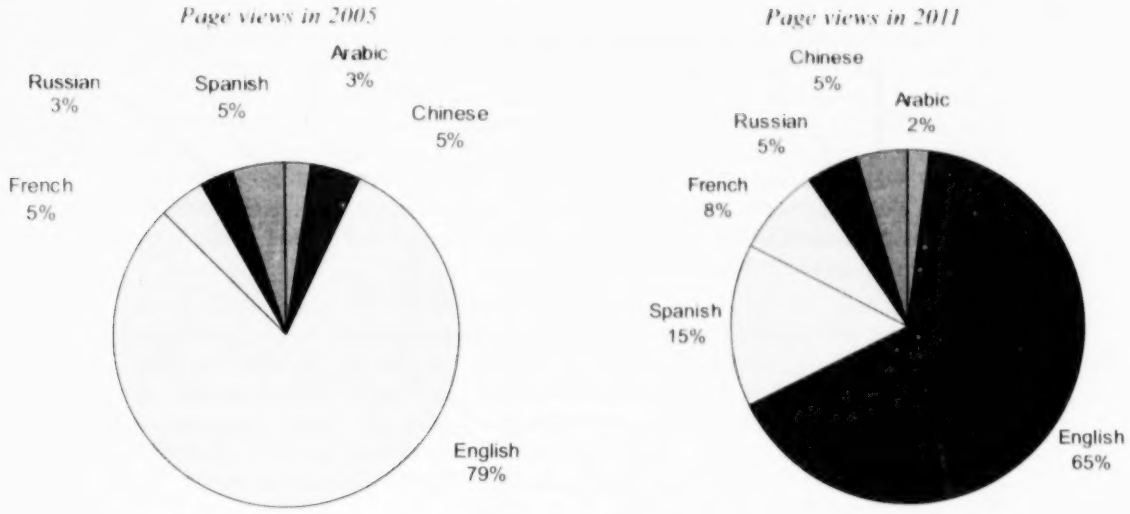
43. To facilitate user access to the information related to the special observances mandated by the General Assembly, such as international days, weeks, years and anniversaries, the Department worked to upgrade the web pages featuring those events. Meanwhile, visitors to the recently redesigned "Global Issues" segment of the website had at their disposal a broader range of topics and a greater selection of in-depth source materials and related multimedia content, such as radio interviews and videos. During the reporting period, the Department also launched a new site highlighting its activities.

B. Multilingualism: from website development to social media outreach

44. In its continuing efforts to enhance the multilingual nature of its products, the Department relies on its highly successful cooperative arrangements with universities in China, Belarus and Spain for the translation of web content into Chinese, Russian and Spanish. In addition to these existing partnerships, the Department has launched a pilot collaborative arrangement with the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management to provide translation into Arabic. This cooperation has already resulted in an increased number of translated pages added to the Arabic version of the website. The Department is also continuing its arrangement with the United Nations Volunteers programme to assist with high-quality translations of content into French.

45. Over the years, the use of the language sites has been growing. This is because new content is being added in the languages. In addition, Internet usage has grown rapidly in the areas of the world where the official languages are used. As can be seen in figure V, the percentage of visits to the Spanish pages increased from 5 per cent in 2005 to 15 per cent in 2011, while the French pages experienced an increase from 5 per cent in 2005 to 8 per cent in 2011. Consequently, of course, the English pages experienced a decline in terms of the percentage of total visits from 79 per cent in 2005 to 65 per cent in 2011. The percentages change owing to a number of factors, such as an uneven amount of material being added to the languages, demographics specific to each language, connectivity and others.

Figure V
Visits to the United Nations website by language, 2011
(Percentage)



Social media

46. Given the proliferation of social networks in various parts of the world, including in the developing countries, the Department paid special attention to expanding its outreach in this sphere in all official languages. On Twitter, the Spanish account, ONUWeb, has gained some 13,800 followers, which represented an increase of over 550 per cent over 2010 figures.

47. On the United Nations channel on YouTube, for example, the Spanish-language page that features more than 50 videos has registered some 19,500 views in just 11 months. The French-language channel, launched in September 2010, now has close to 120 videos with over 60,000 views. The channel has been expanded and now offers playlists by categories: human rights, peace and security, health, the Millennium Development Goals, post-conflict recovery, the least developed countries, violence against women, women's health, and women's rights, Haiti, climate change and the environment and development. Meanwhile, the Chinese-language United Nations channel on *Weibo* continues to grow, crossing the 1 million mark in total number of followers.

48. On Facebook, the French and Spanish pages maintained by the Department are showing steady growth. Compared with 2010, the fan base on the Spanish site has increased by over 300 per cent, reaching a total of nearly 16,000. In a little over a year, the French page has gained nearly 6,700 fans as it has increased the posting of multimedia content, including photos, video and infographics. The Facebook pages in French and Spanish were effectively used to promote Human Rights Day through the posting of articles from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in the weeks leading up to the Day. The initiative attracted the keen interest of users who actively shared the information and commented on the posts. There was a similarly strong interest in the live conversation with the High Commissioner for Human Rights,

which took place on 9 December 2011. An analysis of usage patterns shows that videos generated the greatest number of reactions (39 per cent), followed by photos (31 per cent) and links (22 per cent).

C. Improved web usage metrics

49. Following the introduction in 2009 of Google Analytics as a new system for website traffic analysis, the Department has installed the required code on most existing web pages. At present, virtually all pages on www.un.org are covered, with the resulting statistics offering a much more complete picture compared with earlier analyses. Efforts are under way to further customize and rationalize the use of web metrics tools to achieve more integrated traffic analysis of the entire United Nations website.

United Nations website usage metrics, 1 January to 29 November 2011

Language	*New visits*	*Total visits*	*Unique visits*	*Page views*	*Average pages*
Arabic	653 820	970 503	851 870	2 698 289	2.78
Chinese	1 755 830	2 355 743	2 170 274	6 153 532	2.61
English	16 095 126	28 391 572	23 050 579	86 757 196	3.06
French	2 149 056	3 602 469	3 021 081	10 919 821	3.03
Russian	1 349 957	2 327 885	1 882 963	6 312 386	2.71
Spanish	5 715 316	8 264 824	7 027 251	19 892 226	2.41
Total	**27 719 105**	**45 912 996**	**38 004 018**	**132 733 450**	**2.89**

D. Accessibility

50. The Department has continued to ensure that the United Nations website remains accessible to persons with disabilities, in compliance with the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly. Compliance with these requirements, including for those with visual, hearing and mobility impairments, requires the captioning of many of the increasing number of videos uploaded to the website. The Department has developed technical standards to assist departments and offices across the Secretariat in producing accessible web content and continues to ensure compliance with these standards.

51. The use of mobile devices, such as tablet computers and smartphones, is growing all over the world, with an ever-increasing percentage of users accessing the Internet using these devices. In addition, more and more social network users are relying on these devices to access social networks. The Department is thus ensuring that new pages are accessible on these devices and is completely reprogramming the software applications used to access documents on the official document system, so as to ensure that these documents are accessible by tablet devices and smartphones. It is also finalizing relevant applications for displaying and searching news articles from the *UN News Centre* portal on specific tablet devices.

V. Conclusions

52. The Department of Public Information continued to work on enhancing the effectiveness and expanding the reach of a wide array of its news services and related products. To better address the needs of its varied audiences and partners in various parts of the world, particularly in the developing countries, it maintained a strong focus on traditional means of communication — radio, television and print — while, at the same time, making every effort to capitalize on the opportunities presented by the Internet and new media platforms, including social networking sites and mobile devices. By expanding the use of multimedia products and services and making more products available on the Internet for download in broadcast quality or in high resolution, the Department has been able to reach a more diverse, and younger, audience. At the same time, the Department continued to disseminate information to those who have no, or very limited, access to the Internet.

53. Despite the challenges presented by the ongoing capital master plan, which has resulted in a significant dispersal of production teams and led to technical constraints, the Department was able to ensure the smooth functioning of all of its news and media support services. Building on its experience of monitoring and evaluating its output, the Department used the Teletrax system and Google Analytics to continuously assess its operations and make them more responsive to the needs of their target audiences and clients.

54. The Department has continued its efforts to improve multilingual content on the United Nations website, but challenges identified previously have persisted. Author departments and offices continue to generate and post web content in English only. The expanded use of social media could also lead to an uneven balance in content generation in different languages. With regard to web content management, the Department worked with the Office of Information and Communications Technology to identify short-term open-source content management systems, in order to ensure that content management becomes more organized, secure and useful for visitors to the United Nations website, while remaining within allocated resources.